

By Raquel Rodriguez  
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Around a dozen or so attendees had issues stemming from the availability of on-post housing, to commute times getting to Fort Benning, and future budget cuts. During the town hall meeting, service members and their families explained to U.S. Congressman Sanford Bishop why they don't want to live off post, but why that is an option hard to achieve.

"It means that my son has to go to a non D.O.D. school and a D.O.D education is really good, we like the benefits of living on post, the activities for children, being able to go to commissary, if you live off post after exit 10 you have to drive half an hour to come on post." Said Army Captain Casella, during the question and answer session.

In response, Congressman Bishop said the Army Captain had a valid concern, one he'll take back to Washington.

"If there were off post housing within five to ten minutes of post and if the regulations allowed your child to attend the D.O.D school on post would that satisfy your concerns?" Asked Bishop. Army Captain Casella replied "yes."

As for enjoying amenities on post, Congressman Bishop said all service members no matter where they live are entitled to take part.

"We will go back and try and make sure the regulations are massaged and tweaked so if military families have to live off post that they will incur the least inconvenience of having to get the family amenities to which they are entitled." Said Bishop.

Army Chaplain Charles Hamlin said the Congressman was willing to keep an open mind even when he brought up what he calls the unpopular idea of having a small co-pay for dependents to help the budget crisis.

“Willing to listen and process what your saying, even afterwards I talked to him, he said we may disagree about this but at least he was willing to listen, and say it might come to that, it's a thought that we may need to think about.” Said Chaplain Hamlin.

On February 4th, the Democratic Congressman also held a town hall meeting in Albany, Georgia with members of the Marine Corps Logistics Base to discuss their concerns and questions.